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(54) **MONITOR PHOTODIODE MULTIPLEXER FOR INTEGRATED PHOTONIC SWITCHES**

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**H04Q 11/00** (2006.01)

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None  
See application file for complete search history.

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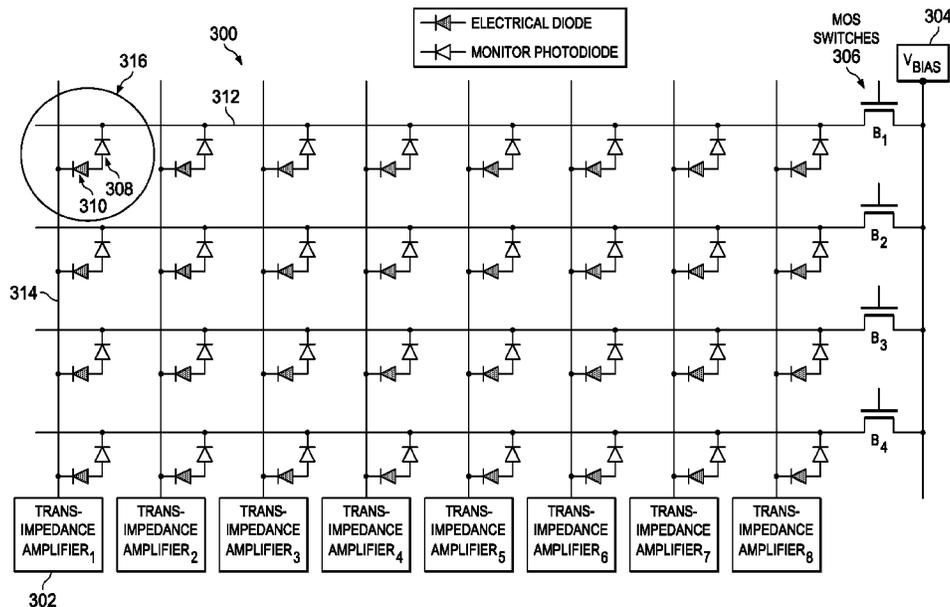
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(57) **ABSTRACT**

System and method embodiments are provided for monitor photodiode multiplexers for integrated photonic switches. Embodiment monitor photodiode multiplexers provide simplified control circuits, reduced power consumption, and improved manufacturability as compared to other solutions. In an embodiment, a photonic integrated circuit (PIC), includes a plurality of input terminals; a plurality of output terminals; and a plurality of monitor elements wherein each of the monitor elements is connected between one of the input terminals and one of the output terminals, wherein each monitor element comprises a photodiode and a rectifier diode, wherein the photodiode comprises a first terminal and a second terminal, wherein the rectifier diode comprises a third terminal and a fourth terminal, wherein the first terminal is connected to the third terminal, and wherein the first and third terminals comprise a same polarity.

**20 Claims, 5 Drawing Sheets**





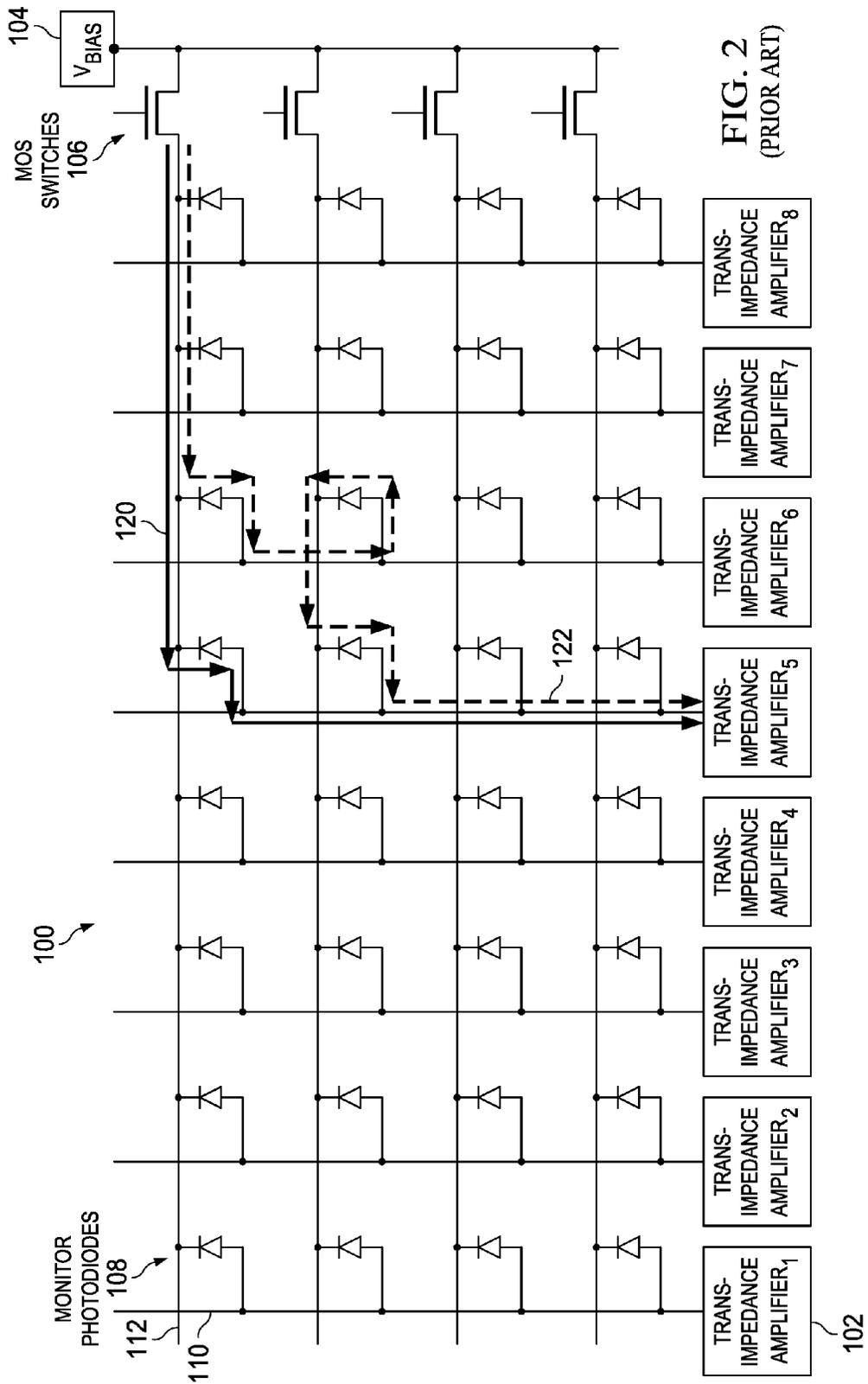


FIG. 2  
(PRIOR ART)

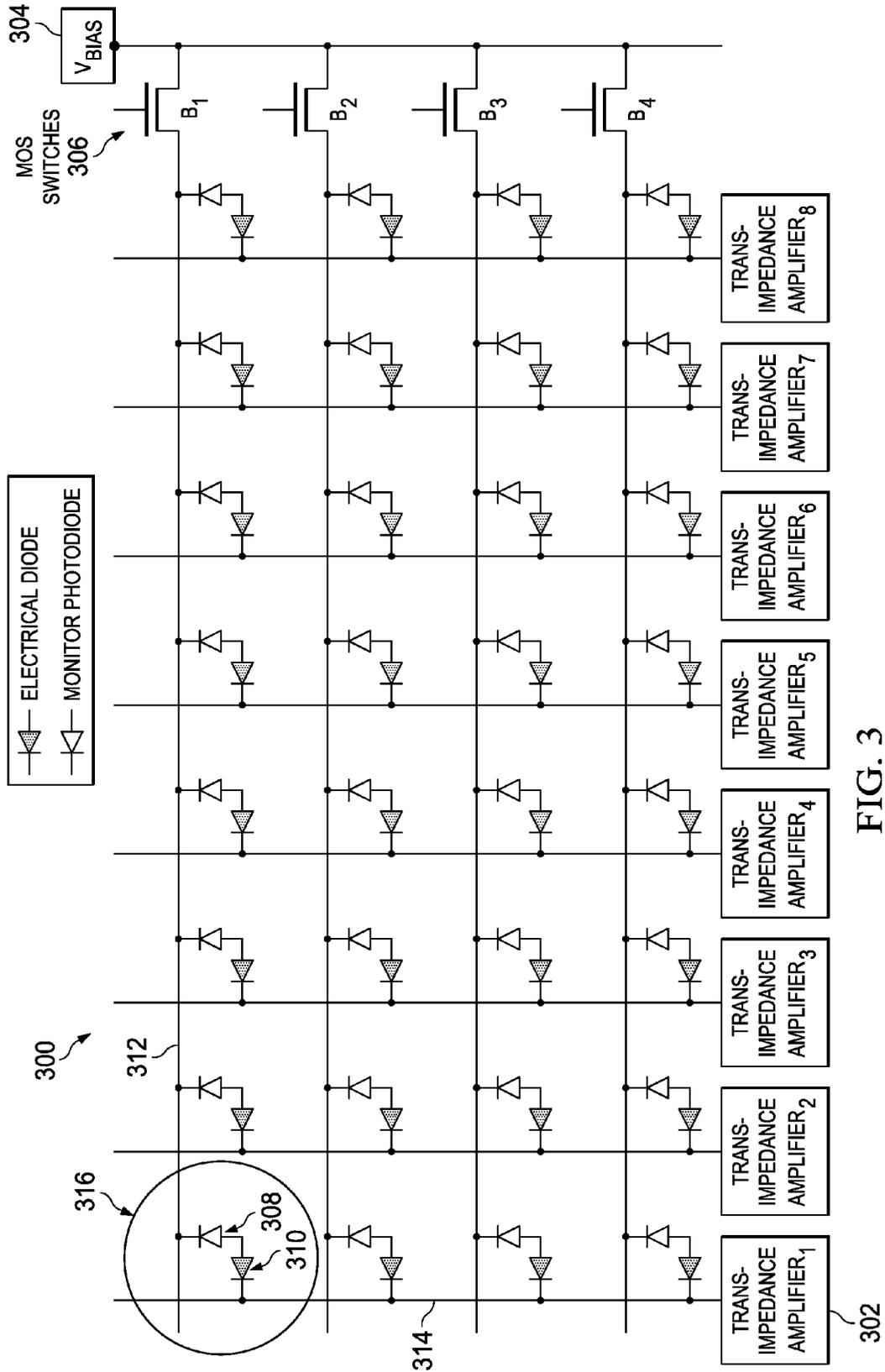
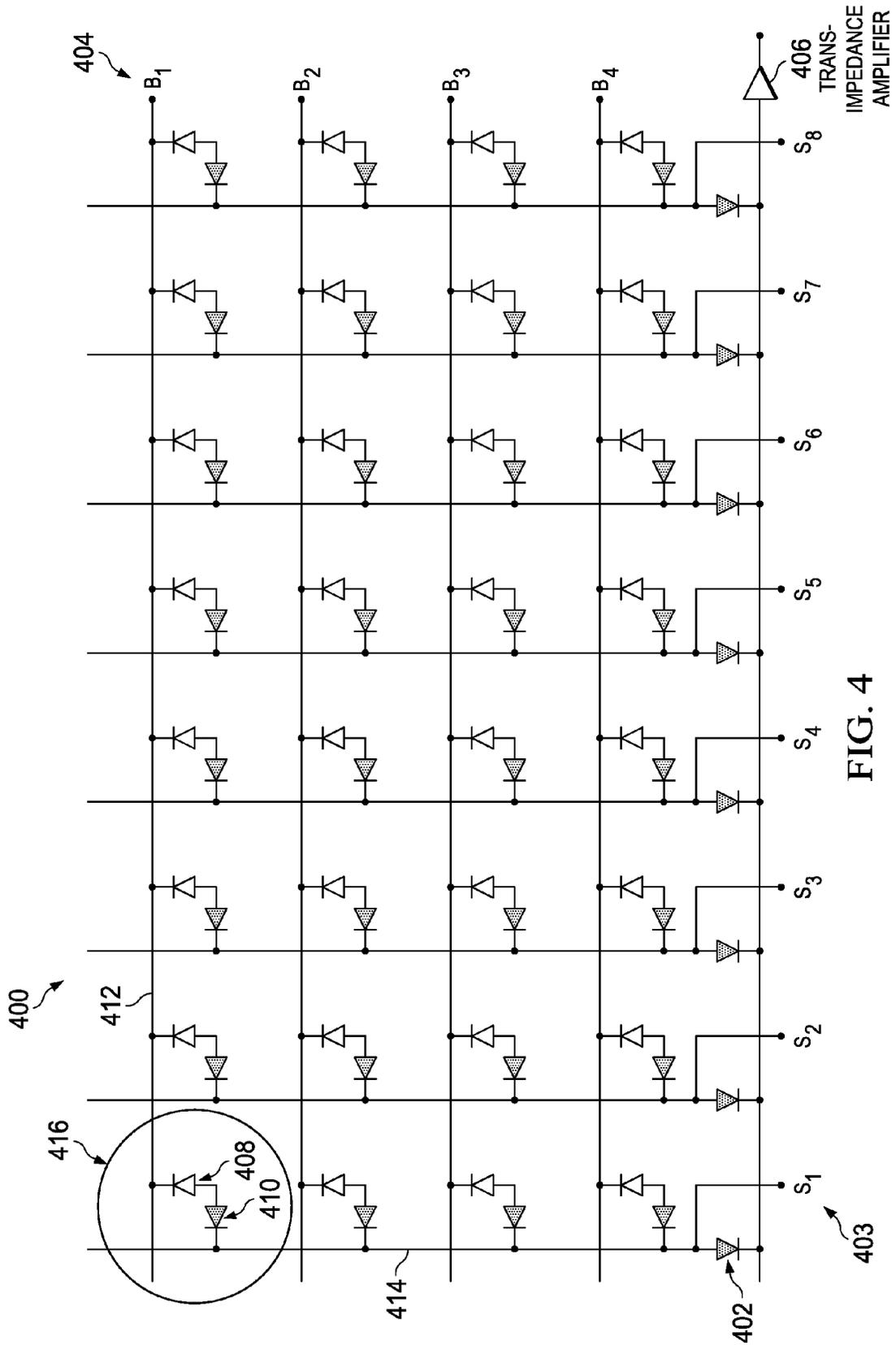


FIG. 3



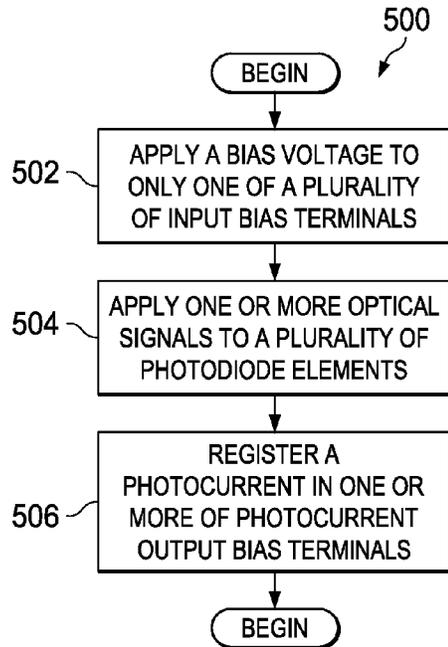


FIG. 5

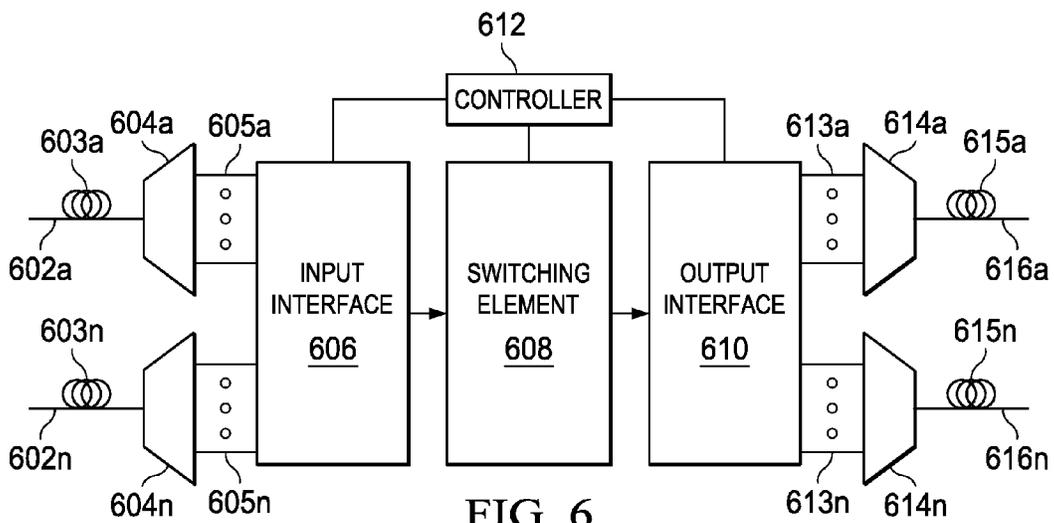


FIG. 6

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# MONITOR PHOTODIODE MULTIPLEXER FOR INTEGRATED PHOTONIC SWITCHES

## TECHNICAL FIELD

The present invention relates to a photonic integrated circuit (PIC), and, in particular embodiments, to systems and apparatuses for photodiode multiplexers.

## BACKGROUND

Integrated photonic devices have great potential for a switching fabric in ultra-small photonic lightwave circuits (PLCs) on low-cost silicon-on-insulator (SOI) substrates. They can include waveguides, splitters, combiners, Mach-Zehnder interferometers, array waveguide gratings (AWGs), and photodiodes for processing optical signals, which fall within the customary telecommunication wavelength bands such as the 1310 nanometer (nm) or 1550 nm bands.

The fabrication process for PLCs is subject to dimensional and compositional tolerances, which may require active tuning or trimming elements in order to function as designed. Photodiodes may be used to monitor the state of the integrated photonic devices by providing electrical feedback signals to electronic driver circuitry used to control them.

As the PLC complexity increases with a growing number of integrated photonic devices, the number of required monitor photodiodes (MPDs) also increases. However, the number of available electrical connections to the PLC may be limited, which could severely limit the PLC complexity if each MPD were required to have an individual connection to external driver circuitry.

## SUMMARY

In accordance with an embodiment, a photonic integrated circuit (PIC), includes a plurality of input terminals; a plurality of output terminals; and a plurality of monitor elements wherein each of the monitor elements is connected between one of the input terminals and one of the output terminals, wherein each monitor element comprises a photodiode and a rectifier, wherein the photodiode comprises a first terminal and a second terminal, wherein the rectifier comprises a third terminal and a fourth terminal, wherein the first terminal is connected to the third terminal, and wherein the first and third terminals comprise a same polarity.

In accordance with an embodiment, a network component configured to monitor optical signals includes a transmitter; a receiver; and an on-chip photonic integrated circuit (PIC), wherein the PIC comprises: a plurality of input terminals; a plurality of output terminals; and a plurality of monitor elements wherein each of the monitor elements is connected between one of the input terminals and one of the output terminals, wherein each monitor element comprises a photodiode and a rectifier, wherein the photodiode comprises a first terminal and a second terminal, wherein the rectifier diode comprises a third terminal and a fourth terminal, wherein the first terminal is connected to the third terminal, and wherein the first and third terminals comprise a same polarity.

In accordance with an embodiment, a method of operating a photonic integrated circuit (PIC) includes applying a bias voltage to one of a plurality of input terminals each connected to a first terminal of at least one of a plurality of monitor elements, wherein each monitor element comprises a photodiode and a rectifier, wherein one terminal of the

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photodiode is connected to one of the input terminals and one terminal of the rectifier is connected to one of a plurality of output terminals; applying at least one optical signal to at least one of the monitor elements; and registering a photocurrent in at least one of the output terminals.

## BRIEF DESCRIPTION OF THE DRAWINGS

For a more complete understanding of the present invention, and the advantages thereof, reference is now made to the following descriptions taken in conjunction with the accompanying drawing, in which:

FIG. 1 is a schematic diagram of a simple monitor photodiode (MPD) matrix system;

FIG. 2 is a schematic diagram of a simple MPD matrix system illustrating possible current leakage paths;

FIG. 3 is a schematic diagram of an embodiment of a system for an improved MPD matrix for on-chip photonics;

FIG. 4 is a schematic diagram of a system for an improved MPD matrix for on-chip photonics;

FIG. 5 is a flowchart of an embodiment method for operating a photonic integrated circuit that incorporates a disclosed MPD matrix system; and

FIG. 6 is a block diagram of an embodiment optical data router.

## DETAILED DESCRIPTION OF ILLUSTRATIVE EMBODIMENTS

The making and using of the presently preferred embodiments are discussed in detail below. It should be appreciated, however, that the present invention provides many applicable inventive concepts that can be embodied in a wide variety of specific contexts. The specific embodiments discussed are merely illustrative of specific ways to make and use the invention, and do not limit the scope of the invention.

A monitor photodiode (MPD) multiplexer is disclosed which permits the performance of the monitoring function on a PLC comprising a given number of MPDs with a greatly reduced number of external electrical connections. In most integrated photonic devices the drift with changes in ambient operating conditions or with age occurs at a sufficiently low rate that a periodic sampling of the device state is acceptable for monitoring and feedback purposes.

The disclosed MPD multiplexer includes a matrix connection of the MPDs such that one or more MPDs can be interrogated in sequence. For example,  $n^2$  MPDs arranged in an  $n \times n$  matrix can be operated with only  $2n+1$  electrical connections. For an increasingly large  $n$ , the reduction in the number of required electrical connections is correspondingly reduced.

As each MPD in operation acts like a current source when illuminated with an optical signal, a simple matrix connection of all anodes in rows and cathodes in columns, for instance, is not feasible, as the photocurrents from all the MPDs in a particular row or column would interfere with each other.

One problem with prior art systems is that as the switch fabric complexity increases, the number of MPD connections rises super-linearly, while the number of electrical connections to the chip are limited.

There are a few examples where current PLCs include MPDs connected to active integrated photonic devices. However, in all known cases, each MPD has individual connections to external circuitry. In contrast, the disclosed embodiments permit a large number of MPDs to be operated using a considerably reduced number of external electrical

connections. Embodiments of the disclosed systems and methods have the advantage of permitting a greater PLC complexity with a larger number of integrated photonic devices monitored with MPDs than was possible before.

In an embodiment, to solve the interference problem, an electrical diode is integrated in series with each MPD in order to permit only a selected MPD to be switched on for interrogating.

In an embodiment, an array  $m \times n$  MPDs includes  $n$  bias connections and  $m$  connections to  $m$  TIAs. In an embodiment, the MPDs are spatially distributed and not in a matrix layout. Each row of MPDs receives a bias sequentially through an electrical switch such as a MOS transistor. The TIAs register the photocurrent of a biased MPD in each column. In an embodiment, a single TIA serves MPDs from multiple columns and multiple rows. In an embodiment, a single TIA serves all of the MPDs in the array.

In an embodiment,  $m$  by  $n$  MPDs requires  $(m+n+1)$  connections and a single TIA. Bias inputs are multiplexed by  $B_i$  terminals. Photocurrent outputs are multiplexed by  $S_i$  switch terminals.

Various embodiments of this disclosure provide one or more of the following benefits. Some embodiments permit higher complexity in photonic circuits that require monitor photodiodes. Some embodiments are integrable into PICs. Some embodiments simplify the control circuits by reducing the number of required elements. Some embodiments reduce power consumption and improve manufacturability.

Embodiments of the disclosure provide reduced manufacturing cost for large PIC switch arrays and their controllers because of reduced connections and/or reduced number of TIAs. Embodiments of this disclosure are applicable to a great variety of tunable photonic device types such as, for example, Mach-Zehnder Interferometers (MZIs), tunable directional couplers, tunable polarization rotators, and array waveguide gratings (AWGs).

FIG. 1 is a schematic diagram of a simple monitor photodiode (MPD) matrix system 100. System 100 includes a plurality of trans-impedance amplifiers (TIA) 102 (labeled TIA<sub>1</sub>, TIA<sub>2</sub>, TIA<sub>3</sub>, TIA<sub>4</sub>, TIA<sub>5</sub>, TIA<sub>6</sub>, TIA<sub>7</sub>, TIA<sub>8</sub>), a bias voltage source 104, a plurality of switches 106, a plurality of bias inputs 112, a plurality of photodiode outputs 110, and a plurality of MPDs 108. Each MPD 108 is connected to one of the bias inputs 112 and one of the photodiode outputs 110. The switches 106 control which of the rows of the MPDs 108 receives a bias voltage. The TIAs 102 convert the photocurrent to a voltage. Every MPD 108 has at least one external electrical connection. An array of  $m \times n$  MPDs requires at least  $m+n$  connections— $n$  for bias supply switches 106 and  $m$  for input to TIAs 102.

One problem with system 100 is current leakage. The current into any particular TIA 102 can be an accumulation of the dark currents of several MPDs 108 as well as possibly all the photocurrents, thereby rendering the signal at any TIA 102 indeterminate.

FIG. 2 is a schematic diagram of prior art MPD matrix system 100 illustrating possible current leakage paths. Two possible current paths 120, 122 are shown. The path 120 is the desired photocurrent path from the MPD 108 selected by the switch 106 into the TIA, being TIA<sub>5</sub> in this example. An alternative current path 122 can provide an undesired leakage into TIA<sub>5</sub> as shown, especially when the MPDs in the current path 122 are generating a photocurrent from illumination, thereby rendering the signal at TIA<sub>5</sub> indeterminate.

FIG. 3 is a schematic diagram of an embodiment of a system 300 for an improved MPD matrix for on-chip photonics. System 300 includes a plurality of  $n$  bias inputs

312, a plurality of  $m$  MPD outputs 314, and a plurality of up to  $m \times n$  MPD elements 316 that each comprise an MPD 308 and a rectifier diode 310. In other words, the whole MPD matrix does not need to be filled, so that the number of MPDs can be  $m \times n$  or less. In an embodiment with  $m=8$  and  $n=4$ , a plurality of TIAs 302 (labeled TIA<sub>1</sub>, TIA<sub>2</sub>, TIA<sub>3</sub>, TIA<sub>4</sub>, TIA<sub>5</sub>, TIA<sub>6</sub>, TIA<sub>7</sub>, TIA<sub>8</sub>) are connected to the MPD outputs 314, and a plurality of bias voltage switches 306 (labeled B<sub>1</sub>, B<sub>2</sub>, B<sub>3</sub>, and B<sub>4</sub>) are connected to the bias inputs 312 for applying a bias from a bias voltage source 304. In an embodiment, the switches 306 are metal-oxide-semiconductor (MOS) switches. The rectifier diode 310 is an electrical diode, which does not receive any illumination and therefore cannot function as a photodetector. Although the matrix of MPD elements 316 shows four rows and eight columns, the actual number of rows and columns is not limited to this, but may be any number as required by a particular embodiment.

Each photodiode element 316 includes an MPD 308 and a rectifier diode 310 that are connected in series with the terminals of the same polarity of the MPD 308 and the rectifier diode 310 connected to each other. For example, in an embodiment, the anode of the MPD 308 and the anode of the rectifier diode 310 are connected to each other. In another embodiment, the cathode of the MPD 308 is connected to the cathode of the rectifier diode 310. The other terminal of the MPD 308 is connected to one of the  $n$  bias inputs 312 and the other terminal of the rectifier diode 316 is connected to one of the  $m$  outputs 314. If the anodes of the MPD 308 and rectifier diode 310 are connected to each other, then the cathode of the MPD 308 is connected to the bias input 312 and the cathode of the rectifier diode 310 is connected to the output 314 when the bias voltage source 304 has a positive polarity. If the cathodes of the MPD 308 and the rectifier diode 310 are connected to each other, then the anode of the MPD 308 is connected to the bias input 312 and the anode of the rectifier diode 310 is connected to the output 314 when the bias voltage source 304 has a positive polarity. If the bias voltage source 304 has a negative polarity, the polarity of the MPD 308 and the rectifier diode 310 connections is reversed. The rectifier diodes 310 inhibit or prevent dark current or photocurrent leakage of MPDs not selected by the bias voltage switch 306 into the TIAs 302.

In an embodiment, in contrast to the prior art, a matrix of  $m \times n$  MPDs requires only  $m+n$  connections and  $m$  TIAs, a reduction over the prior art. Because of the inclusion of the rectifier diodes 310, the MPDs 308 can be spatially distributed and do not have to be in a matrix layout. Thus, the matrix depicted in FIG. 3 should be considered a logical matrix and does not indicate the exact physical placement of any component.

In an embodiment, a bias voltage is applied to one of the plurality of input bias terminals 312 and an optical signal is applied to one or more of the MPD elements 316. A photocurrent is registered in one or more of the photocurrent output bias terminals 314. One of the TIAs 302 registers the photocurrent of a biased MPD element 316 in each column.

In an embodiment, each row of MPDs 308 receives bias sequentially through an electrical switch 306. The TIAs 302 register the photocurrent of biased MPDs 308 in each column.

FIG. 4 is a schematic diagram of a system 400 for an improved MPD matrix for on-chip photonics. System 400 includes a single TIA 406, a plurality of output switch terminals 403 (labeled S<sub>1</sub>, S<sub>2</sub>, S<sub>3</sub>, S<sub>4</sub>, S<sub>5</sub>, S<sub>6</sub>, S<sub>7</sub>, and S<sub>8</sub>), a plurality of input bias switches 404 (labeled B<sub>1</sub>, B<sub>2</sub>, B<sub>3</sub>, and B<sub>4</sub>) connected to a bias voltage source (not shown), a

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plurality of bias inputs **412**, a plurality of outputs **414**, and a plurality of MPD elements **416** that each comprise an MPD **408** and a rectifier diode **410**. System **400** is similar to system **300** except that rather than a plurality of TIAs, a single TIA **406** is used for all of or multiple ones of the MPD elements **416**. Each of the outputs **414** is connected to the input of TIA **406** through a switch element **402** (e.g., a rectifier diode), which is used as an electrical switch. In normal operation, one of the output columns **414** is selected by applying zero current to the corresponding output switch terminal **403**, while applying a bias to all the remaining output switch terminals **403** so that the switch elements **402** are reverse biased with respect to the voltage at the input of the TIA **406**. The switch terminals **402** control which column of MPD elements **416** a registered at the TIA **406**. In an embodiment the switch elements **402** are rectifier diodes. However, those of ordinary skill in the art will recognize that the switch elements **402** may be implemented as other types of switch elements, such as, for example, field effect transistors (FETs) and is not limited to rectifier diodes.

A system such as system **400** having  $m \times n$  MPDs requires only  $m+n+1$  total connections (including the connection to the TIA **406**). System **400** requires only a single TIA. Bias inputs are multiplexed by  $B_i$  terminals **404**. Photocurrent outputs are multiplexed by the  $S_j$  switches **403**. The MPD elements **416** are arranged similarly to the MPD elements **316** in FIG. 3.

FIG. 5 is a flowchart of an embodiment method **500** for operating a photonic integrated circuit that incorporates a disclosed MPD matrix system, such as system **300** or **400**. The method **500** begins at block **502** where a bias voltage is applied to only one of the input bias terminals. At block **504**, one or more optical signals is applied to one or more of the MPD elements. At block **506**, a photocurrent is registered in one or more of the plurality of photocurrent output bias terminals, after which, the method **500** ends. In an embodiment, the input bias voltage is applied one-by-one sequentially to multiple ones of the plurality of input bias terminals. In an embodiment, the input bias voltage is applied one-by-one sequentially to every one of the plurality of input bias terminals.

FIG. 6 is a block diagram of an embodiment optical data router **600**. Optical data router **600** is an example of a device or network component that may be used for implementing the apparatuses, systems, and methods disclosed herein. However, it should be noted that the apparatuses, systems, and methods disclosed herein may be implemented in other types of devices other than routers. Specific devices may utilize all of the components shown, or only a subset of the components and levels of integration may vary from device to device. Furthermore, a device may contain multiple instances of a component. Router **600** includes one or more separators **604**, an input interface **606**, a switching element **608**, an output interface **610**, a controller **612**, and one or more combiners **614**. Each separator **604** is configured to separate an input optical signal **603** communicated over a communication link **602**. Separator **604** may comprise, for example, a wavelength division demultiplexer. As used throughout this document, the phrases “wavelength division multiplexer” and “wavelength division demultiplexer” may include any optical and/or electrical components—including any hardware, software, and/or firmware—capable of processing wavelength division multiplexed signals and/or dense wavelength division multiplexed signals. In an embodiment, the input interface **606**, switching element **608**,

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and/or output interface **610** include a PIC that incorporates the disclosed thermo-optic switches with thermally isolated and heat restricting pillars.

Communication link **602** may include, for example, standard single mode fiber (SMF), dispersion-shifted fiber (DSF), non-zero dispersion-shifted fiber (NZDSF), dispersion compensating fiber (DCF), or another fiber type or combination of fiber types. In some embodiments, communication link **602** is configured to couple router **600** to other optical and/or electro-optical components. For example, link **602** could couple router **600** to a cross-connect or another device operable to terminate, switch, route, process, and/or provide access to and/or from communication link **602** and another communication link or communication device. As used throughout this document, the term “couple” and or “coupled” refers to any direct or indirect communication between two or more elements, whether or not those elements are physically connected to one another. In some embodiments, communication link **602** can comprise a point-to-point communication link or a portion of a larger communication network, such as a ring network, a mesh network, a star network, or other network configuration.

Optical signal **603** may include a multiple wavelength optical signal. For example, optical signal **603** can include at least 5 wavelength channels, at least 100 wavelength channels, or at least 250 wavelength channels. In one particular embodiment, optical signal **603** includes 250 wavelengths having a 50 gigahertz (GHz) spacing within a 100 nanometer (nm) spectral window. In that example, the 100 nm spectral window can be located within the 1400 nm to 1650 nm low-loss window associated with optical fibers. In various embodiments, optical signal **603** can implement one or more data formats, such as, polarization shift keying (PLSK), pulse position modulation (PPM), Multi-Protocol Label Swapping (MPLS), Generalized Multi-Protocol Label Swapping (GMPLS), non-return to zero (NRZ), return to zero (RZ), differential phase shift key (DPSK), or a combination of these or other format types.

In an embodiment, separator **604** is configured or operates to separate optical signal **603** into individual wavelength channels **605** and to couple each wavelength channel **605** to an input interface **606**. In an alternative embodiment, separator **604** can separate optical signal **603** into separate multiple-wavelength channels and couple those multiple-wavelength channels to input interface **606**. Wavelength channels **605** can comprise, for example, Internet Protocol (IP) packets, voice data, video data, or any other data type and/or data format. In this particular embodiment, each wavelength channel **605** implements a frame format that comprises one or more framing bits, a first packet label that precedes a packet data, and a second packet label that follows the packet data. Surrounding a packet data with packet labels advantageously allows for relatively simple error checking at a destination associated with each wavelength channel **605**, however this format is not required. In this example, each wavelength channel **605** implements a Generalized Multi-Protocol Label Swapping (GMPLS) routing protocol within the first and second packet labels. Although this example implements a GMPLS routing protocol, other routing protocols or data formats may be used without departing from the scope of the present disclosure.

In an embodiment, input interface **606** is configured to receive and process each wavelength channel **605** associated with optical signal **603**. Input interface **606** can comprise any optical and/or electrical components—including any hardware, software, and/or firmware—capable of processing, converting, replicating, updating, and/or swapping one

or more packet labels associated with each wavelength channel **605**. In various embodiments, input interface **606** can determine a desired routing for a packet data associated with each wavelength channel **605** and can update a first and/or second packet label using an all-optical label swapping technique. The phrase “all-optical” refers to the performance of a desired functionality substantially free from optical-to-electrical or electrical-to-optical conversions. The “all-optical” functionality does not prohibit optical-to-electrical or electrical-to-optical conversions for use by control circuitry that contributes to the overall function of the device. For example, input interface **606** may include a controller that receives an electrical representation of a packet label and generates a control signal that functions to modulate a swapping sequence on an optical signal.

Switching element **608** is configured to process one or more packet data associated with wavelength channels **605** received from input interface **606** and directing those packet data to a desired destination. Switching element **608** can include any optical and/or electrical components—including any hardware, software, and/or firmware—capable of switching, routing, error checking, and/or managing the one or more packet data or packet labels associated with each wavelength channel **605**. In an embodiment, the switching element **608** includes one or more processors configured to execute instructions. In an embodiment, one or more of the processors are digital signal processors (DSPs). In an embodiment, the switching element **608** includes memory and/or a storage device that are configured to store data and/or instructions to be executed by the processor. In an embodiment, the switching element **608** includes photonic chips. In an embodiment, switching element **608** can comprise a ring configuration having one or more core router nodes and at least one management node. Although this example implements a ring configuration, switching element **608** could implement a mesh configuration, a star configuration, or any other configuration without departing from the scope of the present disclosure. In various embodiments, switching element **608** can operate to process wavelength channels **605** at processing speeds of, for example, at least 10 gigabits/second (Gb/s), at least 40 Gb/s, at least 100 Gb/s, or at least 160 Gb/s.

In an embodiment, switching element **608** is configured to route one or more packet data associated with wavelength channels **605** to an output interface **610**. Output interface **610** can comprise any optical and/or electrical components including any hardware, software, and/or firmware capable of preparing one or more packet data associated with wavelength channels **605** for communication from router **600**. In an embodiment, the switching element **608** includes one or more processors. In an embodiment, the processors include digital signal processors (DSPs). In an embodiment, the switching element **608** includes photonic integrated chips. In this example, output interface **610** operates to communicate the one or more packet data from router **600** to a desired destination through an appropriate wavelength channel **613**.

In an embodiment, each combiner **614** is configured to combine output wavelength channels **613** into one or more output optical signals **615** for communication over a communication links **616**. In an embodiment, combiner **614** includes, for example, a wavelength division multiplexer. The structure and function of communication link **616** can be substantially similar to the structure and function of communication link **602**. In this example, communication links **616** operate to couple router **600** to other optical and/or electro-optical components.

In this example, the controller **612** is also capable of at least partially contributing to controlling one or more functionalities associated with router **600**. That is, controller **612** is not required to be capable of performing the desired functionality alone, but may contribute to the performance of the function as part of a larger routine. Controller **612** can comprise any communication and/or computational device or devices, including any hardware, software, firmware, or combination thereof.

In an embodiment, in operation, the packet data associated with wavelength channels **605** are transparent to the processing functions of router **600**. That is, in operation router **600** does not examine the content of the packet data associated with each wavelength channel **605**. In some cases, router **600** does examine the contents of one or more packet labels and/or other elements of a frame format associated with wavelength channels **605**. In most cases, router **600** operates to maintain the packet data associated with wavelength channels **605** in the optical domain. That is, the packet data associated with each wavelength channel **605** are not subjected to an optical-to-electrical conversion by router **600**. In some cases, one or more of the packet labels and/or other elements of a frame format associated with wavelength channels **605** can be subjected to one or more optical-to-electrical and/or electrical-to-optical conversions. In various embodiments, router **600** may be capable of an aggregate capacity of, for example, at least 5 terabits/second (Tb/s), at least 25 Tb/s, at least 50 Tb/s, or at least 100 Tb/s.

In an embodiment, router **600** can operate to minimize and/or avoid contention between packet data associated with optical signals **603** and **615** and/or wavelength channels **605** and **613** within switching element **608** and/or communication links **602** and **616**. The term “contention” as used herein refers to a process by which a packet data competes with other packet data for communication over a specific wavelength. In some cases, contention can be minimized by, for example, implementing a ring network architecture or performing wavelength conversion. Minimizing and/or avoiding contention can result in a reduction in the congestion associated with an optical signal wavelength.

Although the description has been described in detail, it should be understood that various changes, substitutions and alterations can be made without departing from the spirit and scope of this disclosure as defined by the appended claims. Moreover, the scope of the disclosure is not intended to be limited to the particular embodiments described herein, as one of ordinary skill in the art will readily appreciate from this disclosure that processes, machines, manufacture, compositions of matter, means, methods, or steps, presently existing or later to be developed, may perform substantially the same function or achieve substantially the same result as the corresponding embodiments described herein. Accordingly, the appended claims are intended to include within their scope such processes, machines, manufacture, compositions of matter, means, methods, or steps.

What is claimed is:

1. A photonic integrated circuit (PIC), comprising:
  - a plurality of switches for connection to a bias voltage source;
  - a plurality of bias inputs, each of the plurality of bias inputs connectable to the bias voltage source via one of the plurality of switches;
  - a plurality of monitor photodiode (MPD) outputs; and

an array of monitor elements arranged in a matrix structure wherein each of the monitor elements is connected between one of the bias inputs and one of the MPD outputs,

wherein each of the monitor elements comprises a photodiode and a rectifier diode, wherein the photodiode comprises a first terminal and a second terminal, wherein the rectifier diode comprises a third terminal and a fourth terminal, wherein the first terminal is connected to the third terminal, and wherein the first and third terminals are anodes or the first and third terminals are cathodes.

2. The PIC of claim 1, wherein the second terminal comprises a cathode, and wherein the cathode of each of the photodiodes is connected to the one of the bias inputs.

3. The PIC of claim 2, wherein the fourth terminal comprises a cathode, and wherein the cathode of each of the rectifier diodes is connected to the one of the MPD outputs.

4. The PIC of claim 1, wherein the second terminal comprises an anode, wherein the anode of each of the photodiodes is connected to the one of the bias inputs.

5. The PIC of claim 4, wherein the fourth terminal comprises an anode, and wherein the anode of each of the rectifier diodes is connected to the one of the MPD outputs.

6. The PIC of claim 1, wherein each of the MPD outputs is connected to a respective one of a plurality of trans-impedance amplifiers.

7. The PIC of claim 1, wherein each of the MPD outputs is connected through a switch element to a trans-impedance amplifier that serves multiple monitor elements.

8. The PIC of claim 1, wherein each of the MPD outputs is connected through a respective one of a plurality of output switches to a single trans-impedance amplifier that serves all of the monitor elements.

9. The PIC of claim 8, wherein each of the output switches controls which of the monitor elements are registered at the single trans-impedance amplifier.

10. The PIC of claim 9, wherein each of the output switches comprises one of a rectifier diode and a field effect transistor.

11. A network component configured to monitor optical signals, the network component comprising:

a transmitter;

a receiver; and

an on-chip photonic integrated circuit (PIC), wherein the PIC comprises:

a plurality of switches for connection to a bias voltage source;

a plurality of bias inputs, each of the plurality of bias inputs connectable to the bias voltage source via one of the plurality of switches;

a plurality of monitor photodiode (MPD) outputs; and  
an array a plurality of monitor elements arranged in a matrix structure wherein each of the monitor elements is connected between a corresponding one of the bias inputs input terminals and a corresponding one of the MPD outputs output terminals,

wherein each of the monitor elements element comprises a photodiode and a rectifier diode, wherein the photodiode comprises a first terminal and a second terminal, wherein the rectifier diode comprises a third terminal and a fourth terminal, wherein the first terminal is connected to the third terminal, and wherein the first and third terminals are anodes or the first and third terminals are cathodes comprise a same polarity.

12. The network component of claim 11, wherein the second terminal comprises a cathode, and wherein the cathode of each of the photodiodes is connected to the one of the bias inputs.

13. The network component of claim 11, wherein the fourth terminal comprises a cathode, and wherein the cathode of each of the rectifier diodes is connected to the one of the MPD outputs.

14. The network component of claim 11, wherein the second terminal comprises an anode, and wherein the anode of each of the photodiodes is connected to the one of the bias inputs.

15. The network component of claim 11, wherein the fourth terminal comprises an anode, and wherein the anode of each of the rectifier diodes is connected to the one of the MPD outputs.

16. The network component of claim 11, wherein each of the MPD outputs is connected to a respective one of a plurality of trans-impedance amplifiers.

17. The network component of claim 11, wherein each of the MPD outputs is connected to a trans-impedance amplifier that serves multiple monitor elements.

18. A method of operating a photonic integrated circuit (PIC), comprising:

applying a bias voltage to one of a plurality of bias inputs, each of the bias inputs connected to the bias voltage by a corresponding one of a plurality of switches, each of the bias inputs connected to a first terminal of at least one of an array of monitor elements arranged in a matrix structure, wherein each of the monitor elements comprises a photodiode and a rectifier diode, wherein one terminal of the photodiode is connected to one of the bias inputs and one terminal of the rectifier diode is connected to one of a plurality of monitor photodiode (MPD) outputs;

applying at least one optical signal to at least one of the monitor elements; and  
registering a photocurrent in at least one of the MPD outputs.

19. The method of claim 18, wherein applying the bias voltage comprises applying the bias voltage sequentially to more than one of the bias inputs in a manner such that the bias voltage is applied to only one of the bias inputs at a time.

20. The method of claim 18, wherein registering the photocurrent in at least one of the MPD outputs comprises controlling which of the photodiode elements are registered at the MPD outputs with an output switch.

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